MEMORANDUM

TO: Richard Finkelstein, Dean, College of Arts and Science, UMW
    Ian Newbould, Interim Provost, UMW

FROM: Scott H. Harris, Director, JMMML

DATE: 21 September 2012

RE: Board of Visitors Consideration of Photo Request by James Monroe Memorial Foundation

Background:

At a meeting of the James Monroe Museum's Board of Regents on 2 July 2012, Mr. G. William Thomas, president of the James Monroe Memorial Foundation (JMMF) requested a photographic copy of a painting in the collection of the James Monroe Museum. The painting (accession number JM76.17) is a portrait of an unknown individual that was altered to produce a forged portrait of James Monroe. The JMMF seeks a copy of the portrait made prior to its restoration in 1999, when the Monroe image was removed (see attached before and after images). The JMMF would pay for the photographic reproduction. Mr. Thomas has indicated that the JMMF wishes to display the image at the Monroe Birthplace in Westmoreland County.

The Board of Regents voted to refer the JMMF request to the UMW Board of Visitors, which is the governing authority for the James Monroe Museum.

Recommendation:

Staff recommends approval of this request by the Board of Visitors, contingent upon the following required actions by the JMMF:

1. The JMMF will pay all costs associated with making the photographic copy (the standard museum photo reproduction fee is $250).

2. The JMMF President has informed the director of the James Monroe Museum that the JMMF will display the image at the Monroe Birthplace site in Westmoreland County, Virginia. This is the only use of the image authorized by the museum and UMW.

3. The displayed image must be accompanied by a label explaining clearly that the Monroe likeness was a forgery, that restoration of the painting in 1999 eradicated this likeness, and that the restored painting is part of the James Monroe Museum’s collection.

Attachment (JM76.17 before and after images)
Forged James Monroe Portrait
Accession Number JM76.17